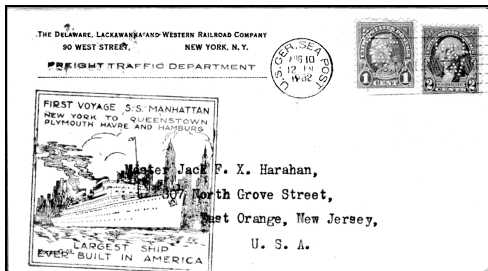


Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad

John Lyding (LM#116)

I have a soft spot in my heart for the defunct Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. This is probably a result of having their main line from Ridgewood to Paterson, NJ running alongside our home in Hawthorne. I should note that it was only 200 yards or so to the Erie's main line from Jersey City. That soft spot led me to the cover illustrated below which touches on many aspects of philately.

Let us examine this item starting with the perfin and then working clockwise around the cover. A 1c green Franklin and a 2c red Washington lead stamp were used as postage. Each of these is neatly punched "DL/&W", perfin pattern D61 or D61A as listed in the *Catalog of United States Perfins*. The pattern is most likely D61; however I really can't be sure without separating at least one of the stamps from the envelope.



There is nothing remarkable about the addressee except to note that he – one Master Jack F. X. Harahan – lived in East Orange. By the use of the title “Master” we can assume that Jack was age twelve or less and therefore we may also assume that it is not a self-addressed cover. However, was the lad a relative (grandson?) of J. T. Harahan, Second Vice President of the Illinois Central Railroad Company? Harahan was a co-author of the *American Time Table and Train Order System* and it was in his

official capacity that he received General Superintendent A. S. Sullivan's reports of the crash of trains #1 and 83 which archivists refer to as “The Hanrahan Letters.” That collision would not have been of particular interest were it not for an engine wiper in the railroad shop at Canton, IL, named Wallace Sauinders who set the incident down in the song “Casey Jones.” Strange coincidence, Hanrahan was killed in a train collision on 25 January 1912 in Kinmundy, IL, while enroute from Chicago to Memphis.

The purple, rubber-stamped cachet notes the maiden voyage of the SS Manhattan and lays claim to its being the largest ship ever built in America. That ship was the product of the New York Shipbuilding Company, Camden NJ, and at 705 feet and 24,000 tons displacement was indeed the largest ship built in the United States by 1931. The cachet lists her initial voyage as New York, Queenstown, Plymouth, Havre, and Hamburg. United States Lines operated her on that trans-Atlantic run almost exclusively until she was taken over by the military in World War II.

The corner card, our link to the perfin, is that of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company. My first thought was that there might be a link between the railroad and steamship companies, but I could find none. The DL&W's beginnings date back to 1832 and the Ligget's Gap Railroad, later the Lackawanna & Western, and the Delaware & Cobb's Gap Railroad. These two lines merged in 1853 to form the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western.

Finally, we come to the postmark. I originally made this out to be “U.S., GER. SEA POST/AUG 10 1902”. However, I have determined that it is 1932.